

KEKAHA SUGAR COMPANY, SERVICE STATION
8315 Kekaha Road
Kekaha
Kauai County
Hawaii

HAER HI-83-B
HI-83-B

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

SERVICE STATION KEKAHA SUGAR COMPANY

HAER No. HI-83-B

<u>Location:</u>	Kekaha Road Kekaha County of Kauai Hawaii USGS 7.5 minute series topographic map, Kekaha, HI 1983 Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM) coordinates: 04.431600.2429880
<u>Date of Construction:</u>	1940
<u>Engineers & Builders:</u>	Unknown
<u>Present Owner:</u>	Kekaha MS, LLC
<u>Present Occupant:</u>	Vacant
<u>Present Use:</u>	Abandoned
<u>Significance:</u>	The service station is associated with the history and development of Kekaha Sugar Company's mill. It is a good example of a service station built in Hawaii during the late 1930s, which reflects its period in its use of materials, craftsmanship, method of construction, and design.
<u>Report Prepared by:</u>	Don J. Hibbard and Wendy Wichman Architectural Historians Mason Architects, Inc. 119 Merchant Street, Suite 501 Honolulu, HI 96813
<u>Date:</u>	December 2008

GENERAL DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION

The service station is located on the premises of the Kekaha Sugar Company's mill site at the corner of Kekaha and Kala roads. The single story, hollow tile building fronts Kekaha Road and typifies service station design of the period with the office looking out upon the canopy-covered pump island and the service bays placed to the side of the office. The restrooms' location on the side to the rear is also typical. The station's steeply-pitched hip roof reflects its Hawaii location more than the times, as many of its contemporaries throughout the nation were assuming more modern, flat roofed appearances.

The 61' x 54'-6" building has a rectangular plan with a high-pitched, shake-shingled hip roof with broad, four foot wide, overhanging eaves. The roof's exposed rafter tails have been cut at an angle to provide a decorative accent. The 13'-1" high hollow tile walls have a skim coat of concrete. All the windows have been boarded over. The north facing façade is three bays wide with the service bays occupying the two east bays, and the office the west end bay. The pump island's hip-roofed canopy extends out 43' from the office to shelter the two gasoline pumps, which are no longer active. The pumps sit on a 9" high, oval concrete base, as do two 15" square concrete columns that support the canopy. Originally the island had three pumps consisting of an ethanol pump flanked by standard gasoline pumps.

The station's office is 17'-1" across. Its façade features a centered door with a glazed top half, which has been boarded over. A window with a transom above is on either side of the door. In the office's west wall are a pair of boarded up windows. Behind the office is a storage room, which in 1986 housed tires. In its west wall, the storage room has a window, as well as a metal door that leads to the outside. A second door accesses the office, and a third in the east wall, opens to the service bays.

The two service bays are open on the front and the east side. The service bays have a reinforced concrete slab floor and two lifts. A doorway in the rear (south) wall leads into a storage room, which included the station's inventory of oil filters in 1986. Two doors in the west wall access the office and the tire storage room behind it. An L-shaped, 2' x 2' column at the northeast corner of the service bays supports the hip roof's reinforced concrete wall plates, which span the length of the two openings. Along the east side opening at ground level is a 4" high, oval, concrete island, which at one point served as a base for fuel pumps, having two standard gasoline pumps and one that dispensed kerosene or ethanol. North of this abandoned island is another, more recent, island which is rectangular and made of metal. It stands 9" high and supports a diesel fuel pump.

Along the east side of the service station, to the rear of the service bays, are two restrooms. These have doors similar to those in the office, and each restroom is ventilated by a window. The women's room was at the rear, (south), corner and the men's room was north of it.

The rear, (south) elevation contains three windows for the storage room, and is open at its west corner. This corner mirrors, on a smaller scale, the open service bays on the front. The area measures 12' x 30' and has a concrete slab floor with a drain. It functioned as a wash room for vehicles.

The service station is very much intact with no additions or alterations other than the updating of its original pumps.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

See the HAER Report (HAER No. HI-83-A) for the Kekaha Sugar Company Sugar Mill Building for the development of the Kekaha Sugar Company's sugar mill.

The Kekaha service station drew upon recognized service station design traditions of its time with the presence and arrangement of its office, canopy, and service bays to the side.

Initially, during the opening decades of the twentieth century, gasoline was dispensed from free standing, curbside pumps and was sold by grocery stores, general stores and hardware stores. By 1914, the gasoline station had emerged, characterized by having its pumps set back from the road, usually with a small office and a canopy extending out from it to shelter the pumps. During the 1920s roadside pumps disappeared, the result of the introduction of zoning laws in 1923 that banned such curbside filling stations. The widespread proliferation of gasoline stations into urban and residential areas during 1920s also led to new, more substantial, more residential-looking buildings, designed to gain neighborhood acceptance. As a result canopies became less common, but as gasoline stations expanded to offer mechanical and lubrication services, service bays appeared. These were at first detached structures, but increasingly they became incorporated into the main building, adjoining the office. In northern climates with cold winters, wash rooms were also provided alongside the service bays beginning in 1925. That year also saw the introduction of hydraulic lifts, which soon supplanted the below-grade grease pits. In addition, rest rooms, which first appeared at a few gasoline stations during the teens, became a commonplace part of the stations during the 1920s. With the advent of the Great Depression, gasoline stations began to sell tires, batteries and accessories in an effort to expand revenues. As a result of all these changes, by the 1930s the filling station had evolved into a service station. The 1930s also brought a new design paradigm for gasoline stations, as the new and modern-looking art deco and moderne styles were introduced, often with a revitalization of the canopy. Other stations assumed the form of a sleek oblong box.

The Kekaha Service Station incorporates the traditional concepts of service station design in its form and adopts them to its situation. The office-service bays-canopy layout followed numerous prototypes developed over the previous two decades. The

use of the shingled hip roof, with its more residential connotations, was outmoded by the late 1930s, although it worked well for Kekaha's situation. Drawing upon the belief that a service station could be a civic asset, the station's broad hipped roof associated the building with the larger plantation community--not simply with the more utilitarian operations of the mill and sugar company--and integrated the building into the context of the surrounding residential area.

On another level the roof also grounded the service station within a Hawaii-based building tradition, which favored hip roofs with broad overhanging eaves over flat roofs. In addition, the opening of the service bays to the outdoors was another departure from typical mainland designs with their enclosed bays. Open to the outdoors on two sides, the service bays allowed for cooler working conditions, and proclaimed the benign character of Hawaii's climate. Likewise, the rear vehicle wash room further reflects this openness of Hawaii-based design. However, the presence of the wash room is, in itself, an interesting anomaly, as it originated as a response to harsher weather conditions. Obviously the designer was familiar with this amenity as an element present in service stations and felt strongly that it should be included, but handled it in a climate sensitive manner. This is a rare surviving example of a wash room associated with a pre-World War II service station in Hawaii. As few service stations from this period survive in the islands, it is difficult to assess how common a feature it was in Hawaii's service station buildings.

The building's use of hollow-tile concrete block as a building material is a rather early use of this material in service station construction, as nationally this material did not come into vogue in service stations until the late-1950s.

SOURCES

Original Drawings:

Approximately one hundred original drawings and blue prints for the Kekaha Sugar Company's Sugar Mill and its machinery exist. These abandoned drawings were discovered in the mill office, and are incomplete. The plans will be deposited in an appropriate repository, which has yet to be determined. In addition the Kauai Historical Society has a collection of maps and drawings, which contain materials pertinent to Kekaha Sugar Company, including the "Plan of Service Station Layout." The following drawings provided information for this report.

Title & Sheet #	Date	Office in Title Block	Drawn By	Drawing Number
Fire Protection System	June 25, 1941	Civil Engineering and Survey		383

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		Department		
Plan of Service Station Layout	April 25, 1950			
Plan Service Station	Feb 26, 1986	Factory Department	J.K.	

Bibliography:

Jakle, John, and Keith Sculle, *The Gas Station in America*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1994.

Margoiles, John, *Pump and Circumstance*, New York: Little, Brown & Company, 1994.

Russell, Tim, *Fill 'er Up, the Great American Gas Station*, Osceola, Wisconsin: Voyageur Press, 2007

Vieyra, Daniel, *Fill 'er Up, An Architectural History of America's Gas Stations*, New York: MacMillan, 1979

Witzel, Michael Karl, *American Gas Stations: History and Folklore of Gas Stations in America*, Osceola, Wisconsin: Motor Books International, 1998

Witzel, Michael Karl, *Gas Stations Coast to Coast*, Osceola, Wisconsin: Motor Books International, 2000

PROJECT INFORMATION

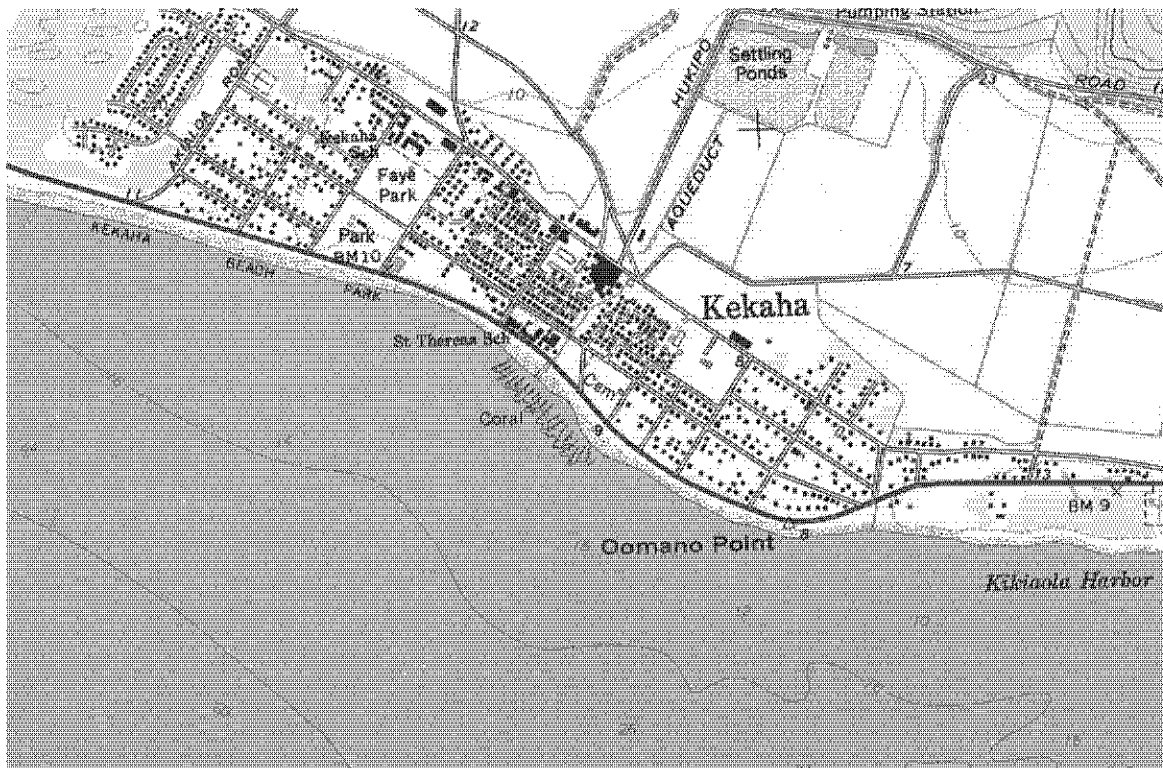
The following documentation was prepared in response to the proposal to demolish the historic property and build housing on the approximately twenty one acre parcel. The purpose of this documentation is to historically record the architectural and mechanical elements of the mill and its supporting structures. The property owner and the Hawaii State Historic Preservation Division (SHPD) have agreed that the mill complex is over fifty years old. The SHPD in a July 15, 2008 letter indicated that the office believed the mill complex met the criteria for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. SHPD recommended that HABS documentation be completed as a means of mitigating the loss of this historic property. The owner agreed to the SHPD's request for documentation, and after further discussion between Mason Architects and SHPD concerning the presence of intact machinery in the mill, it was decided the documentation would follow Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) standards.

The project manager for the HAER documentation was Polly Cosson Tice of Mason Architects, Inc. Don J. Hibbard, Ph.D. and Wendy Wichman of Mason Architects were the researchers and authors of the reports. Both Polly Cosson Tice and Don Hibbard are architectural historians who meet the Secretary of the Interior's Professional

Qualifications in architectural history. Carol Stimson of Mason Architects assisted with the editing and production of the reports. The large-format photographs were taken by David Franzen of Franzen Photography.

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Location Map
U.S.G.S. Kekaha, Hawaii, 1983:



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Figure 2:
Kekaha Service Station, Site Plan, 1950

